

FIRST REGULAR SESSION

# HOUSE BILL NO. 921

## 98TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE BURLISON.

0673H.03I

D. ADAM CRUMBLISS, Chief Clerk

### AN ACT

To amend chapters 161 and 633, RSMo, by adding thereto two new sections relating to dyslexia.

*Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the state of Missouri, as follows:*

Section A. Chapters 161 and 633, RSMo, are amended by adding thereto two new sections, to be known as sections 161.1005 and 633.420, to read as follows:

**161.1005. 1. By July 1, 2016, the department shall employ a dyslexia therapist, licensed psychometrist, licensed speech-language pathologist, certified academic language therapist, or certified training specialist with a minimum of three years of field experience in screening, identifying, and treating dyslexia and related disorders to serve as the department's dyslexia specialist.**

**2. The department shall ensure that the dyslexia specialist has completed training and received certification from a program approved by the legislative task force on dyslexia and is able to provide necessary information and support to school district teachers.**

**3. The dyslexia specialist shall:**

**(1) Be highly trained in dyslexia and related disorders, including best practice interventions and treatment models;**

**(2) Be responsible for the implementation of professional development; and**

**(3) Serve as the primary source of information and support for districts addressing the needs of students with dyslexia and related disorders.**

**4. In addition to other duties assigned under subsection 3 of this section, the dyslexia specialist shall also assist the department with developing and administering professional development programs to be made available to school districts no later than**

EXPLANATION — Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted from the law. Matter in **bold-face** type in the above bill is proposed language.

19 the 2016-2017 school year. The programs shall focus on educating teachers regarding the  
20 indicators of dyslexia, the science surrounding teaching a student who is dyslexic, and  
21 classroom accommodations necessary for a student with dyslexia.

633.420. 1. For the purposes of this section, the term “dyslexia” shall be defined  
2 as a disorder that is neurological in origin, characterized by difficulties with accurate and  
3 fluent word recognition and poor spelling and decoding abilities that typically result from  
4 a deficit in the phonological component of language, often unexpected in relation to other  
5 cognitive abilities and the provision of effective classroom instruction, and of which  
6 secondary consequences may include problems in reading comprehension and reduced  
7 reading experience that can impede growth of vocabulary and background knowledge.  
8 Nothing in this definition shall require a student with dyslexia to obtain an individualized  
9 education program (IEP) unless the student has otherwise met the federal conditions  
10 necessary.

11 2. There is hereby created the “Legislative Task Force on Dyslexia”. The joint  
12 committee on education shall provide technical and administrative support as required by  
13 the task force to fulfill its duties. The task force shall meet at least quarterly and may hold  
14 meetings by telephone or video conference. The task force shall advise and make  
15 recommendations to the governor, general assembly, and relevant state agencies regarding  
16 matters concerning individuals with dyslexia including education and other adult and  
17 adolescent services.

18 3. The task force shall be comprised of seventeen members consisting of the  
19 following:

20 (1) Four members of the general assembly, with two members from the senate to be  
21 appointed by the president pro tem and two members from the house of representatives  
22 to be appointed by the speaker of the house;

23 (2) The commissioner of education, or his or her designee;

24 (3) One representative from an institution of higher education located in this state  
25 with specialized expertise in dyslexia and reading instruction;

26 (4) A representative from a state teachers association or the Missouri National  
27 Education Association;

28 (5) A representative from the International Dyslexia Association of Missouri;

29 (6) A representative from Decoding Dyslexia of Missouri;

30 (7) A representative from the Missouri Association of Elementary School Principals;

31 (8) A representative from the Missouri Council of Administrators of Special  
32 Education;

33           (9) A professional licensed in the state of Missouri with experience diagnosing  
34 dyslexia including, but not limited to, a licensed psychologist, school psychologist, or  
35 neuropsychologist;

36           (10) A speech-language pathologist with training in an Orton-Gillingham  
37 remediation program recommended by the Missouri Speech-Language Hearing  
38 Association or a certified academic language therapist recommended by the Academic  
39 Language Therapists Association who is a resident of this state;

40           (11) A representative from an independent private provider or nonprofit  
41 organization serving individuals with dyslexia;

42           (12) An assistive technology specialist with expertise in accessible print materials  
43 and assistive technology used by individuals with dyslexia recommended by the Missouri  
44 assistive technology council;

45           (13) One private citizen who has a child that has been diagnosed with dyslexia; and

46           (14) One private citizen who has been diagnosed with dyslexia.

47           4. The members of the task force, other than the members from the general  
48 assembly and ex officio members, shall be appointed by the president pro tem of the senate  
49 or the speaker of the house by September 1, 2015, by alternating appointments beginning  
50 with the president pro tem of the senate. A chairperson shall be selected by the members  
51 of the task force. Any vacancy on the task force shall be filled in the same manner as the  
52 original appointment. Members shall serve on the task force without compensation.

53           5. The task force shall make recommendations for a statewide system for  
54 identification, intervention, and delivery of supports for students with dyslexia including  
55 the development of resource materials and professional development activities. These  
56 recommendations shall be included in a report to the governor and legislature and shall  
57 include findings and proposed legislation and shall be made available no longer than  
58 twelve months from the task force's first meeting.

59           6. The recommendations and resource materials developed by the task force shall:

60           (1) Determine valid and reliable diagnostic assessments and protocols that can be  
61 used and the appropriate personnel to administer the assessments in order to identify  
62 children with dyslexia or the characteristics of dyslexia as part of an ongoing reading  
63 progress monitoring system in schools;

64           (2) Recommend a research-based instruction and intervention system including a  
65 list of approved dyslexia therapy programs, to address dyslexia or characteristics of  
66 dyslexia for use by schools in multi-tiered systems of support and for services as  
67 appropriate for special education eligible students;

68           **(3) Develop and implement preservice and inservice professional development**  
69 **activities to address dyslexia identification and intervention, including utilization of**  
70 **accessible print materials and assistive technology, within degree programs such as**  
71 **education, reading, special education, speech-language pathology, and psychology;**

72           **(4) Review teacher certification and professional development requirements as they**  
73 **relate to the needs of students with dyslexia;**

74           **(5) Examine the barriers to accurate information on the prevalence of students with**  
75 **dyslexia across the state and recommend a process for accurate reporting of demographic**  
76 **data; and**

77           **(6) Study and evaluate current practices for diagnosing, treating, and educating**  
78 **children in this state and examine how current laws and regulations affect students with**  
79 **dyslexia in order to present recommendations to the governor and general assembly.**

80           **7. The task force shall hire or contract for hire specialist services to support the**  
81 **work of the task force as necessary with appropriations made by the general assembly for**  
82 **that purpose or from other available funding.**

83           **8. The task force authorized under this section shall automatically sunset on August**  
84 **31, 2017, unless reauthorized by an act of the general assembly.**

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